

THE SABRES' BLADE

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South Mecklenburg High School

8900 Park Road

Charlotte, North Carolina, 28210

Volume XXIV

Ragsdale named new band director

By Andrew Buchert

On February 10 Mr. David Ragsdale assumed the position of Band Director. He replaced Mr. Grossek, who directed South's bands since 1986.

Mr. Ragsdale conducts the Concert Band, consisting mostly of freshmen, the Symphonic Band, an intermediate band consisting of upperclassmen, the Wind Ensemble, which plays the most difficult music and is by audition only, and the Jazz Band, a new addition to South's band program this year. He also teaches AP Music Theory.

Mr. Ragsdale earned his Bachelor's degree in Music Education from Appalachian State University. He began working towards his Masters in music performance and wind conducting at the University of Florida. He directed a church choir for three years while in college, and directed the University of Florida Symphonic Band during his tenure there.

Although he is impressed with the overall quality of South's band program, Ragsdale's main goal is to in-

crease the number of students enrolled in the band program next year. "I want to see the band double in size," he said.

The Marching Band is a voluntary band which is, "the most visible public display of South," said Ragsdale. "I want it to become something that the students are proud to be in and something the school respects, by increasing its size, its quality, and its spirit."

Mr. Ragsdale encourages students to come out and support the Jazz Band. "It is a very accomplished band, thanks to Mr. Grossek," said Ragsdale.

To fulfill his goal of doubling the number of students in the band program, Mr. Ragsdale invites anyone who previously played in a band and is interested in starting again to come see him. He stresses the proven fact that those who participate in arts programs score higher on standardized tests such as the SAT's than those who don't. "Music is more complex than people would like to think, and it trains and exercises parts of

the brain which are seldom otherwise used," said Ragsdale.

Mr. Ragsdale is very impressed with South. "I was pleasantly surprised and appreciative of the positive reactions by the students and faculty. Dr. Knox, the faculty, and the students have been incredibly supportive. The change couldn't have gone more smoothly," he said.

"Mr. Grossek will be a hard act to follow," said Ragsdale. "He molded the band into a respectable program. Our goal now is to move on and ever upward."

Ragsdale is taking the Wind Ensemble to state competition on March 20 in Grade 6 music, the highest category of high school band music. At the beginning of May, several students from each of the bands will be going to Orlando, Florida to perform.

"I want people to feel welcome in the band," said Mr. Ragsdale. "I want for myself and the students in band to have fun, and what better way to do that than to play music."



1997 Reverse Homecoming King Tripp Ingle.

Homecoming was a Tripp

By Kevin Ballantine

Tripp Ingle was crowned as the 1997 Reverse Homecoming King during the half-time of the basketball game against East Mecklenburg. The first runner-up was Tommy Hinshaw and the second runner-up was Karl Walker.

The ceremony began with Nikki Harris performing a classical ballet selection in center court. Ms. Cynthia Shepard,

mistress of ceremonies, introduced the Reverse Homecoming Court. The festivities concluded with the Gospel Choir's rendition of "I Believe I Can Fly" by R. Kelly.

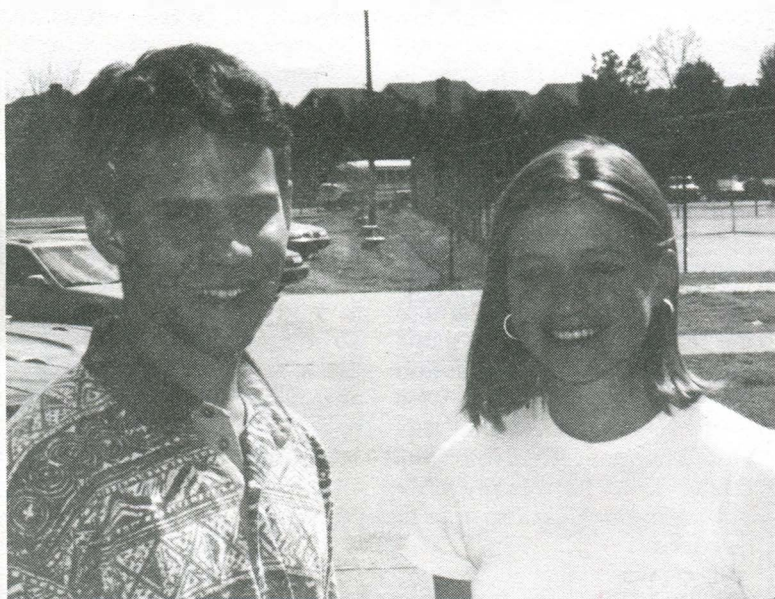
The other members of the Reverse Homecoming Court were Alexander Sarkozi, Lamont Joyner, T.J. Vinson, Jeff Watson, Bobby Patterson, Andre Ross, and Rosha Hooper.

Mauriello, Bailes nominated for Phil Hughston Award

By Karen Whichard

The Phil Hughston Award is one of the most prestigious awards given annually to high school athletes in the Charlotte area. Phil Hughston, a football player for Garinger High School nearly twenty-five years ago, was an outstanding student and leader. He was killed by injuries sustained in a football game against South Meck. Hughston lives on through this prestigious honor, given to a male and female recipient each year based on scholarship, leadership, community service, and athletic participation.

Mike Mauriello and Amy Bailes are South's two nominees this year. Mike, who is ranked ninth in the class of 1997, is a track star. He has been a member of the varsity track and cross country team for four years, and received All Conference honors in cross country for three of those years and track for one season. He was the first person from South ever to win a Regional Cross Country Championship, a feat he accomplished this year. He was also captain



Congratulations to Amy Bailes and Michael Mauriello.

of the cross country squad his junior year.

Amy is also a successful student athlete, as well as an officer in BETA Club and DECA. She has been a member of the varsity softball team since her sophomore year, a member of the varsity basketball team for two years, the varsity volleyball

captain and basketball captain her senior year. During the summer she competes on an elite area softball team, the Charlotte Lightning, which has won numerous state titles and has been runner-up in the World Series.

Both nominees are outstanding students and leaders as well as athletes.

Government proposes new driving policy

By Katie Payerlie

North Carolina is considering legislation aimed at curbing the dangers posed by inexperienced drivers. Statistics accumulated by the NC Division of Motor Vehicles show that 28% of licensed sixteen year olds are involved in a car crash annually. About seventy people die every year in North Carolina as a result of these crashes. Although maturity factors into these statistics, the primary reason for the high accident rate among young drivers is lack of experience.

As it stands, anyone who passes the test can get a driver's license the day they turn sixteen. North Carolina is looking to change that procedure. Some members of Congress have decided to sponsor a bill that failed in 1993, which would enact a Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) system that has already passed in two states. Un-

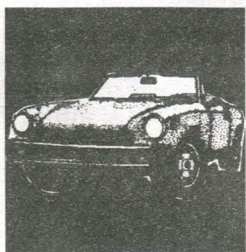
der this program, new drivers would have to pass through two levels before receiving their full provisional license.

The first level is a limited learner's permit for drivers age 15 and older. To pass this level, one must complete one year of violation-free driving with adult supervision. The second level is a limited provisional license which allows the teen to drive unsupervised between 5 a.m. and 9 p.m. and to and from work after 9 p.m. The final level is the full driver's license.

If a driver begins the GDL process at age 15, he can get a full provisional license at age 16 and a half.

Support for this program is widespread. In a recent telephone survey, 74 percent of participants believe that North Carolina should change to a GDL.

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**Billy talks
about John
Boy...and
other stuff**

WRFX

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Beyond black and white

By Karen Whichard

"The locker room is one of the few places in America where black and white come together and deal with each other on a daily basis. I think the rest of society could learn something on race relations by using athletes as an example." -Dennis Rodman

Racism. It's probably the fastest way to incite passion from any individual. As we near the end of the twentieth century, having fulfilled W.E.B. DuBois' prophecy that race relations would be the paramount issue of the century, attitudes in our community make it appear as if race relations will be the key issue beyond the year 2000 as well.

Many individuals have tried various ways to promote racial harmony. Seminars are held throughout the Charlotte area; yet, volatile situations continue to arise. A solution is needed, and the answer can be found in the attitudes of high school athletes in the locker room.

There is something special about a high school basketball team. They spend a majority of the school year together, including Christmas and Thanksgiving. As a member of the South Meck Lady Sabres, I know our team is a family unit, black and white.

We eat together, pray together, live together and dream together - activities which rarely cross racial boundaries. Above all, we love each other. It has not been easy, though, by any stretch of the imagination. If citizens of our community could work as we have, many issues

such as Affirmative Action would cease to cause so much turmoil.

First, we are candid. Rarely a day goes by without a question such as, "Why do white people do this, or why is it that black people...?" Honesty is said to be the best policy, and by remaining so we have learned to accentuate our differences in order to come together.

Second, we always integrate. Before each game we pray and hold hands, alternating black and white. Our bench is a giant "oreo," and whenever we do anything, we attempt to integrate. Our city seems poised to end busing and other means of forced integration, and therefore our generation must take steps so that we do not kill what has already been accomplished.

Our situation is not always easy. Whenever we go out, people stare, whether we are in South Park Mall or Midtown Square. Racist songs are played in restaurants we frequent, with management nonchalantly proclaiming, "We didn't write the song," or, "we don't censor our music." Ironically, though not surprisingly, these attitudes are often found in people who do not consider themselves racist.

Our team is very successful, and the main ingredient is our love for one another. If people in the city of Charlotte could learn to love those who are different, recurring problems could be solved. After all, those who work together achieve the most they possibly can.

Don't blame gangsta rap for problems

By Branna Calloway

Scott Syfert's article entitled *Snoop 101: Welcome to Michael Eric Dyson's World*, which ran in the February 19 edition of *The Sabres' Blade*, gives readers the wrong image of gangsta rap. The article's subject is UNC Chapel Hill communications professor, Michael Eric Dyson's speech at commencement on Dec. 15.

Syfert and Dyson have some differing views in this article. I agree with Dyson on one point he made, but I totally disagree with Syfert's comments.

Dyson made a good point when he described gangsta rap as "a celebration of the freedom of lyrical creativity, rhetorical dexterity and racial signification." On the other hand, Syfert described it as "the hard-core rap music that celebrates profanity, violence

against women, and homicide."

Gangsta rap is a musical art form that gets its stories from the black community, usually directed at the young black audience as fact and as a warning.

Syfert also said that if "the values of Milton and Yeats were taught instead of Snoop Doggy Dogg, we can expect our children to escape degradation." Well, if telling our children the truth about their environment is going to degrade them, then I'm all for it.

One thing is important when dealing with something so controversial; remember that gangsta rap is a form of entertainment and the interpretation of gangsta rap causes problems, not the lyrics or the lifestyles of the performers.

Letter to the Editor: First Tupac, now Biggie Smalls. Who will be next?

"Biggie Smalls? Dead? Yeah right!"

These were the first words that came out of my mouth when a friend of mine called to deliver the news early Sunday afternoon. Strangely enough, these were the first thoughts that went through my head seven months ago at a school football game. Shocked murmurs of "Tupac died..." ran through the crowd. I reassured a tearful girl that there was no way that Tupac could have died. I had been listening to one of his CDs a couple of hours before. It wasn't possible. But then I suppose that anything is possible.

Sure, there was talk in the news, in *Vibe* magazine, and in the parking lot after the game that there would be retaliation for Tupac's death, but who could have guessed that this would happen? The Notorious B.I.G.? Sure, he was probably Public Enemy #1 on Tupac's list, but dead?

Biggie was to *Bad Boy Records* what Tupac was to *Death Row* and now, just like that, they're both gone. I can already hear the speculations from the conversations in school tomorrow: "I bet Suge organized that from jail."

"Maybe Faith killed him because she really loved Tupac..." "Man, I bet you Biggie faked his death too..."

But the biggest rumor that will be flying will be: "Tupac has got to be alive!" Biggie's death can't help but fuel the rumor that Tupac is alive somewhere like his alias Machiavelli, lying low while he plots revenge. My stepdad's idea was that "The 7 Day Theory" part of Tupac's Machiavelli CD was perhaps synonymous with the seven months that have elapsed

between Tupac's death and Biggie's. Is there a connection? I don't know. In fact, I'm not sure I know anything anymore.

I was sure Tupac would live through his second war with gunshots, but he (supposedly) didn't. I never imagined that Biggie would be killed, although he was probably the most likely target. So what happens next?

I remember hearing adults say that Tupac's death was no surprise because he was, after all, a GANGSTA rapper. I suppose Biggie's death will be treated the same way in the minds of many adults. But to us in the so-called "Rap community" it means a lot more. To me, being young, being Black, being a rap music lover, and claiming no loyalty to East nor West, Biggie's death raises many issues: the increasing death rate of young Black men, the close-minded way many adults will deal with this situation, where rap music is headed, and the question on the outcome of the East Coast-West Coast riot.

Now that the two heads of the infamous rivalry are gone, will this be the end of the violence? Will the players on both sides see that no more violence is needed after two have already been killed? Or will this retaliation continue back and forth, one death being the result of another that had been the result of yet another?

The feeling that most fills my mind and my heart is sadness because I do realize that I will never again walk into Sam Goody and buy a CD baring the name of the Notorious B.I.G.

Editor's Note: The author is a member of the junior class at South Mecklenburg and wishes to remain anonymous.

Their Take On It

Teens Demand Challenge

In a new study by the Public Agenda Foundation, seven out of ten teenage students say they would pay more attention and learn more if they were challenged more.

The survey of 1,300 students found more than 90.9 percent want more rigor and relevance in the hallowed basics of reading, writing, and math and today's fourth basic, computer literacy...

Students spoke about how little work they do to earn acceptable grades and consequently, how boring and meaningless their classes seem.

Now, to be realistic, if higher standards were to become the rule, these same kids who say they're hungering for rigor would howl in protest at first. After all they are teenagers, perfectly capable of simultaneously making adult demands and childish excuses.

But the study confirms that they recognize something important: They are being short-changed. They know their schools are letting them down by letting them get by.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

What is English?

So what exactly is Standard English? Perhaps it is whatever the situation calls for. When speaking with people who are extremely important or when interviewing for a job, one needs to be able to sound fairly cultured. If one spoke Ebonics during a job interview, the chance of getting the job would immediately decrease. But does it matter an inordinate amount to Queen Elizabeth II how I speak to my friends?

Ebonics isn't a language any more than the drawl of a Texan or the sharp staccato of a Bostonian. It is a dialect, yes, but not a language unto itself. Our primary goal is communication. If I can understand who I am talking to and they can understand me, why should it matter to anyone else how I speak? Unless we all want to go back to Britain to learn to speak "Propah English," then we should let people speak how they want to among their peers even if their dialect isn't considered cultured. After all guys, ain't this America?

The East Mecklenburg Eagle

Correction:

The senior mystery in last month's issue was incorrectly identified by the Editor-in-Chief as Dionya Fair. It should have been identified as Laticia Walker. *The Sabres' Blade* Staff apologizes for any embarrassment or inconvenience for either Ms. Fair or Ms. Walker.

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Faces in the Crowd

Crystal Clear

By Jennifer Collins

Sports? Clubs? Study? Choosing among these areas is never a dilemma for junior, Crystal Muse. Academics always comes first. She is currently enrolled in AG and AP classes. She also finds time to be the vice-president of Peaceful Sabres, along with being the President and founder of the Sisters With Vision club.

In addition to her scholastic activities, Crystal is an active member of her church youth group and Habitat for Humanity.

Her favorite things to do are acting and dancing. Her greatest achievement was starring in an Off-Broadway play while living in New York, her home town. Crystal moved to the Charlotte area from Queens.

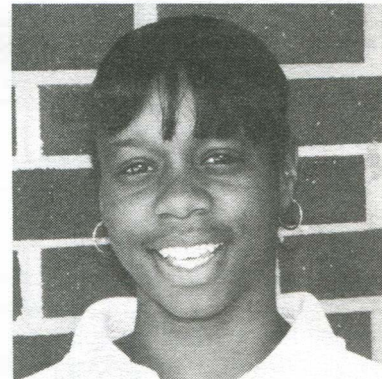
When not dancing or studying, Crystal can be seen

driving her black Neon. This fun car represents Crystal's upbeat personality. Her favorite character is Minnie Mouse, which has become her nickname from many friends.

Crystal hopes to attend Florida A&M and major in Business Management or Communications, but for now she is simply concentrating on making it through her junior year. She commented, "Knowing that it will be over soon is what keeps me going. Also, it helps to know that everyone must go through it."

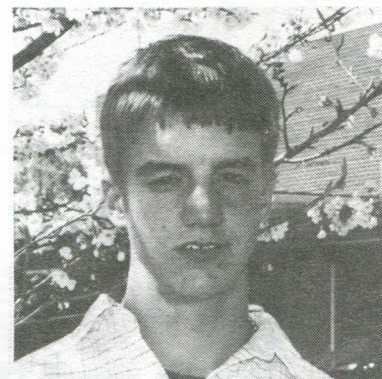
Being active is more than a hobby for Muse; it's a way of life. Not only is she well-rounded, but she has a strong grasp on what she expects out of her future. We can all learn a lesson about life from Crystal; live it to enjoy it.

Is the cloning of humans ethical; should it be legal?



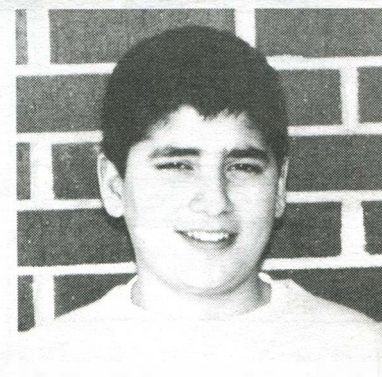
"God created us to be our own individuals."

Reshika Hudson, 12th



"The cloning of humans should be tested, but not abused."

Josh Hughes, 9th



"An individual's personality cannot be duplicated."

Amin Mehrizi, 10th



Favorite Color: Navy blue
Pet Peeve: Phony People
Role Model: Mother
Birthday: May 6
Nickname: Minnie Mouse
Best Feeling: Making people laugh

Jovial Jimmy

By Nicole Ewing

If you are looking for a guy who is funny, Jimmy Kimball is your man. He can always make you laugh. Not only does he have a great personality, but he can handle many extra-curricular activities and still keep a 4.5 GPA.

Jimmy is secretary of sophomore council and is active in Octagon, Latin Club, Latin Honor Society, Peaceful Sabres, Debate, and DECA. He was one of ten national qualifiers in a state-wide DECA competition who will compete in Anaheim. "Jimmy is a dependable, hard working young man, well-liked by his friends, teachers and classmates," said Jimmy's marketing teacher, Mr. Schultz.

Jimmy is also very involved in organizations around the community. He is in City at Peace, Young Life, and is an

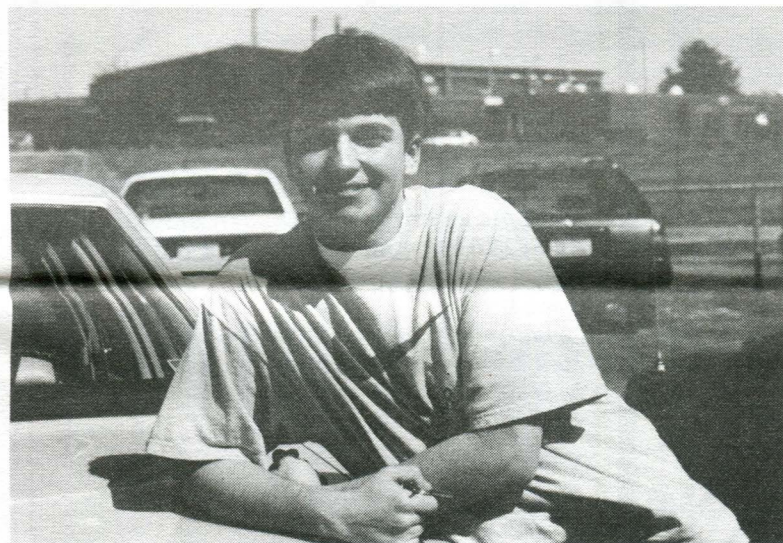
active member of his church Youth Group.

After a hard day at school, one can see Jimmy driving his canary yellow '81 Pontiac to work. He recently started working at The Finish Line, and he also helps out at the YMCA, where he keeps score for the basketball games.

On the weekends he enjoys spending time with his friends and going to parties. He loves to play basketball in his spare time.

After high school, Jimmy plans to attend Duke University, become a lawyer, and get rich.

Jimmy represents the sophomore class well. He manages to balance the schoolwork, clubs, and friends, and he still comes out with a smile.



Birthday: February 7, 1981
Favorite Artist: Phish
Preferred Food: Pizza
In CD Player: 2Pac
Favorite Movie: Who Framed Roger Rabbit

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Entertainment

Perfect pair makes an Odd Couple

By Lauren Coggins

"I think it's a...nerve spasm!"

I was almost doubled over with laughter and completely unable to breathe. However, my condition was no different from that of any other member of the audience. Clarissa Shepard and Jennifer Lyon were able to keep a rather large audience laughing continuously for over two hours with their rendition of Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple*, (Female Version.) They provided perfect chemistry for this drama of mismatched personalities.

South's production was an adaptation of the classic play and film with Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau. Lyon portrayed Olive, an avid sports fan who is nowhere near as neat and orderly as her

roommate Florence, a whining hypochondriac.

They were absolutely hilarious together, and with the added talent of the supporting cast—Matthew Jordan, Gordon Franklin, Katie Payerle, Michelle Cashio, Nicole Meade and Sarah Markusen—they kept audiences laughing through the entire show. Olive's biting sarcasm was a perfect complement to Florence's frantic moose calls, (which came at the onset of the nerve spasm) and the well-timed snide remarks of Sylvie and Micky, which were extremely funny.

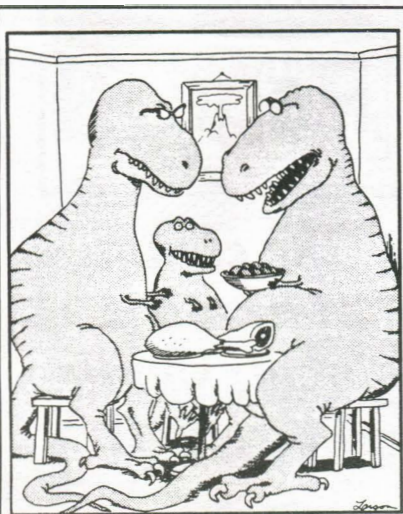
"Face it Florence, we're just a rotten pair."

Florence and Olive may not have made a good team, but Lyon and Shepard were perfect together. It seemed from their chemistry, that they had worked together many times before. Instead, *The Odd Couple* marked the first time they

had ever worked together on stage.

Gordon Franklin and Matthew Jordan also made a great team as Manolo and Jesus, two Spanish brothers new to America. They are not new to the art of dating, though. Both bring flowers and candy for their dates, and both make sure that Florence knows to put the flowers in water instead of the candy. They know how to show their sensitive sides too, especially when Florence tearfully tells them about her soon-to-be ex-husband.

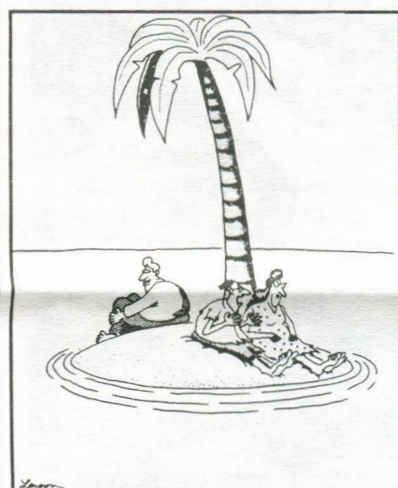
The Odd Couple was the best show I have ever seen in the South Meck auditorium, and the wonderful acting and non-stop humor made for a great evening. Congratulations to the Drama Department, the Director Ms. Guzman, and the cast of *The Odd Couple* for putting on such a successful show.



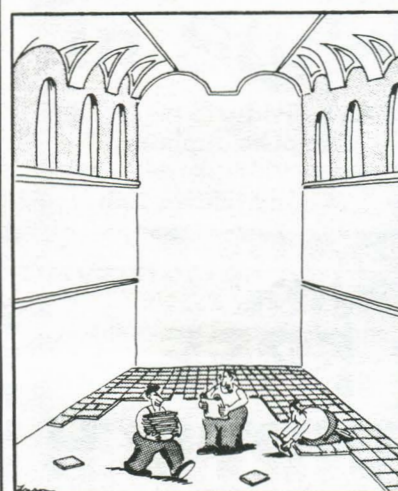
"Hey, I'm trying to pass the potatoes! ... Remember, my forearms are just as useless as yours!"



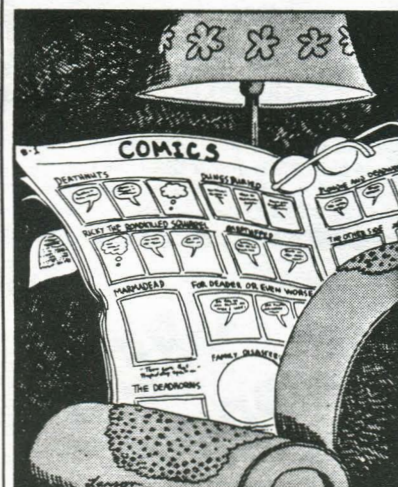
Llamas at home



"What? You've met someone else? What are you saying? ... Oh, my God! It's not what's his name, is it?"



Although history has long forgotten them, Lambini & Sons are generally credited with the Sistine Chapel floor.



Ghost newspapers

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The Empire Strikes Back with less force than Star Wars

By Walter Boyle

Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back, the sequel to *Star Wars: A New Hope* was re-released and touched up after 17 years. Now with Special Edition added to the title, a few new surprises, and crystal clarity like never before, the second in the series and the fifth chapter in the epic saga has struck the big screen. The only problem is that the Empire really did not strike back, or at least Lucas Films did not. Although *The Empire Strikes Back* was as powerful as ever, there was much lacking that would make it a Special Edition.

The additions made to this

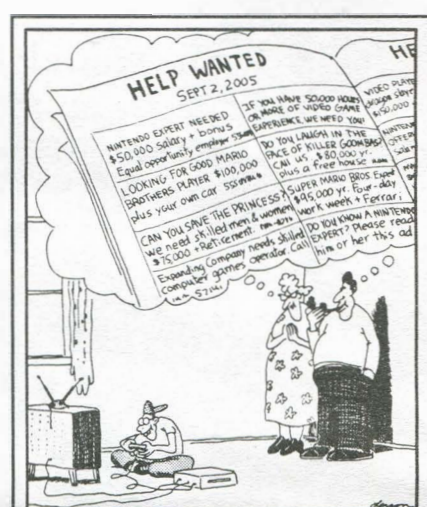
movie were minimal at best; there were a few seconds of city scape and not much else. When *Star Wars: A New Hope* was re-released it had over four more minutes of new footage, scenes, and characters, plus a few new surprises. What is lacking from *The Empire Strikes Back* is what the companies are basing their ad campaigns on. They don't need to add Special Edition to the title for people to go see it. People young and old would have flocked to the theater even if it was dubbed in Spanish. "Special Edition" is not what makes this movie great;

it is the story line and the great acting by Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, and Harrison Ford that does the trick.

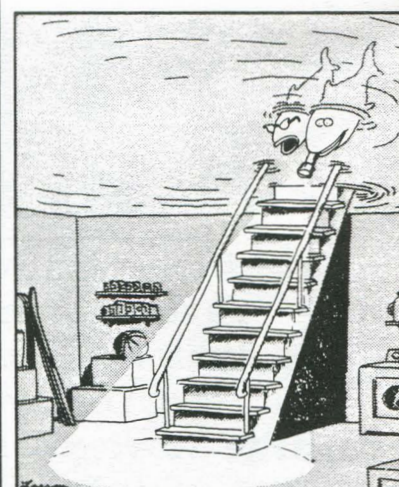
But beyond that, *The Empire Strikes Back* will be one of the best movies of 1997; the plot is intriguing and the characters are detailed and in-depth. The space fights are choreographed beautifully, and the explosions are enough to make any pyromaniac happy. There is something for everyone: incredible fight scenes with lightsabers, deadly shoot-outs and some awful truths revealed.

But *The Empire Strikes Back*

had a hard act to follow—*Star Wars: A New Hope*—and did quite poorly. The quality of *The Empire Strikes Back* was good but it just couldn't stand up to *Star Wars: A New Hope*. It needed more to it. They make it out to be a big deal but it just isn't. Although *The Empire Strikes Back's* content was exceptional, and the story line was incredible this "Special Edition" just did not live up to the name that it was given. It was a good idea to re-release *The Empire Strikes Back*; most of the people today have never seen it on the big screen. It is one of those movies that you put on your "must see" list.



Hopeful parents



"Good heavens, John! Call someone! ... The entire basement looks dry!"



and The Arts...

WRFX: Billy Says...

By Nicole Ewing

Q. How did you get started?

A. I didn't get interested in being on the radio until I was in high school. I did a lot of drawing because I thought I was going to be a commercial artist, and I always had the radio on. One day I just started thinking, well, that sounds like a fun job; maybe I'll try that. I went to the National School of Broadcasting in Atlanta for basic training to get my license. Later on, someone called me up and told me that he found a guy to do the morning show and that we would go well together. Johnny and I did a few tapes and then we were on the air.

Q. What's your favorite part of your job?

A. Well, it's pretty good work because it's not that hard to do. I don't mean to say that there is no skill in it at all, but I like to get up and sit around and drink coffee and read the newspaper, and I found a job where I can get paid to do that.

Q. What is your least favorite part of your job?

A. Getting up at 5:15 every morning and carrying on a semi-intelligent conversation. In fact, when I quit doing it, that'll probably be why. I just get tired of having to get up so early. If it wasn't for the schedule, I would have no complaints at all.

Q. Where do you get your show ideas?

A. Well, you know, you watch TV and read the newspaper and you bounce ideas off of that, eventually someone will come up with something that could work.

Q. How do you know if an idea is going to be funny or not?

A. You don't know really. We've worked together for so long that if everybody else thinks it's funny, you usually can be pretty confident that it's a good idea. Usually the things that come right off the top of your head are the things people think are funniest.

Q. Where do you come up with your characters?

A. A lot of them are just little bits and pieces of things that you've heard over the years. Some are based on real people that would make good characters, plus little pieces of yourself in there too, of course.

Q. Why do you like working with John Boy?

A. Well, there is no idea that's too goofy. He's willing to try just about anything, which is kind of fun.

Q. What's your funniest time on the air?

A. Oh man, we've been doing this so long, there's so many. I remember a time, not exactly how it happened, Rayford was giving the news report and for some reason he leaned on the chair just right, and the chair leaned over. All of us were laughing for like five minutes because it was so ridiculous. I guess it was one of those things where you had to be there, but it would be hard to top that.

Q. What's your most embarrassing time on air?

A. There have been so many over the years, and it's hard to really be embarrassed about anything. I guess

we've just gotten to the point where everything we do is goofy and embarrassing.

Q. Do you have any advice for anyone who wants to go into the radio business?

A. The thing about radio is you have to want to do it for free. It's a tough business; there's an awful lot of people involved in it. There are very few people who get really successful at it. The best way to start out is to go to a radio station and be willing to do just about anything to get your foot in the door.

Q. Are you happy with where your show has gone?

A. Yeah, I have to get up awful early, but the syndication has been a real interesting thing because you are able to go into different cities and places without having to move around.

Q. Do you ever get nervous?

A. Oh Yeah! Sometimes I'll still get nervous and not know what I'm doing. It's harder for me to do a show in front of a big group of people; that's always a little weirder because on the air no one ever sees you.

Q. Anything else?

A. It's something that's a little bit different every day and something that you really have to have a hunger for because it can be tough when you're getting started. But once you break through, there is nothing like it. I enjoy it a lot.

Bittersweet Humor

Humor is subjective. Different things are funny to different people. But on rare occasions, everyone agrees that some jokes just aren't funny. In fact, a certain candy company has consistently come up with bad jokes. You've heard them-- the Laffy Taffy jokes that couldn't be worse no matter how much intoxicating substances their writers used. And they couldn't be any better no matter how many intoxicating substances the readers used. After much research, not only did we find that the grape ones taste better than the banana, we also determined the Top Five Corniest Laffy Taffy jokes...

- Q. What do you get when you cross a potato with an onion?
A. A potato with watery eyes.
- Q. Why did the basketball player bring a duck to the game?
A. He wanted to shoot a fowl shot.
- Q. Why is the letter 'A' like a flower?
A. Because a bee follows it.
- Q. How does a farmer count his cows?
A. With a cowculator.
- Q. Why did the cucumber blush?
A. He saw the salad dressing.

The Chicken Complex



With America's new obsession with low-fat, low calorie and a new taste for the unconventional, it's no wonder that chicken has become an integral part of our society. Simple phrases such as "it tastes like chicken" have become national jokes. The phrase, "You are a chicken" does not imply that the speaker believes that the listener is a feathered creature that can't fly, but rather a scardy-cat. (Cats are another article.) And while the joke, "Guess what? Chicken Butt!" is annoying and sophomoric, it is yet another example of America's obsession with chickens. Think about it, we Play Chicken, Do the Chicken Dance, Eat mor Chikin, have Chicken fights, play with rubber chickens, call girls Chicks (offending some), feel like Chicken tonight, and ponder the question "Which came first, the Chicken or the egg?" among other things. But one of the most mind boggling chicken questions that has been asked for generations has finally been answered. Here are the projected celebrity answers to the age old question: Why did the Chicken cross the road?

Dan Quayle: It sawe a potatoe.

Machiavelli: So that its subjects would view it with admiration, for who among them has the strength to contend with such a paragon of avian virtue?

Aristotle: To actualize its potential.

Any statistician: Sometimes it crosses, sometimes it doesn't. On average, it's actually in the middle of the road.

Any mathematician: Actually, it hasn't crossed the road yet, but it is approaching the other side asymptotically over time.

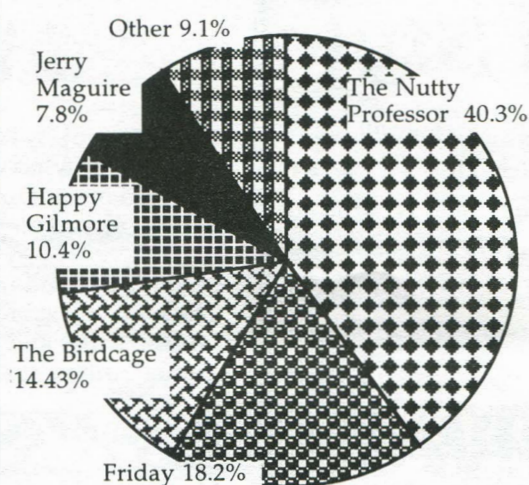
**RadioShack**SM

You've got questions. We've got answers.

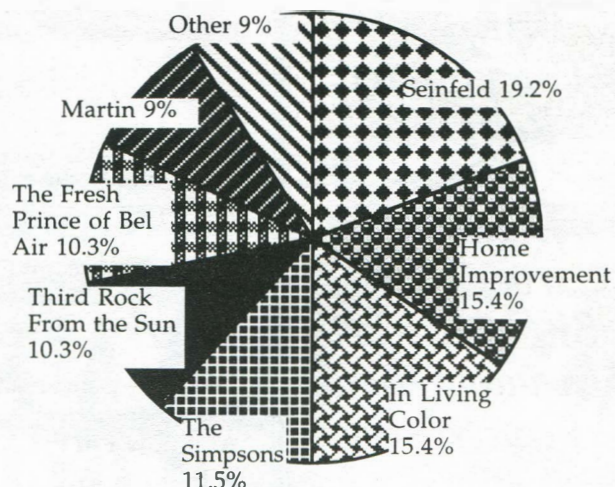


Your Favorites

S.M.H.S. Poll: Funniest Movies



S.M.H.S. Poll: Funniest Sitcoms



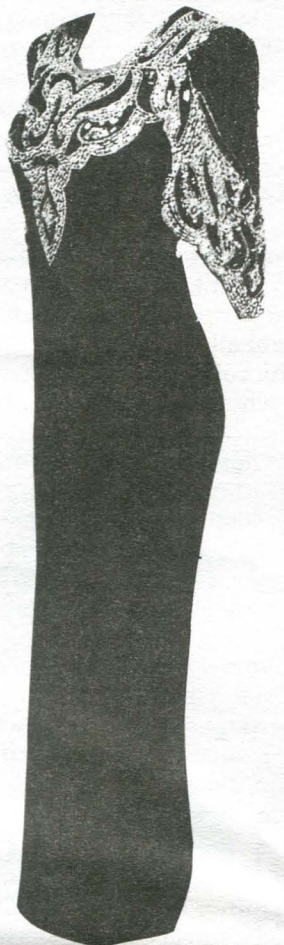
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Strappy heels

What's Out



Poofy, Ruffles, Flashy,
Ballgowns, Clunky Heels,
Overly Priced

Compiled and Designed by Branna Calloway and Nicole Ewing

Steppin' Out in Style

Founders Hall April 26, 1997

Dining in Style

Prom time is here again, which means that all of the glamorous couples will be strutting their stuff out to eat at the most elegant restaurants in town. Just in case you can't think of anywhere that would fit the prom scene, we've thought of a couple of places that might help you decide on where to take your date on this memorable night:

Melting Pot
Bistro 100
Lamplighter
Rafferty's
Harpers
Manzettis
Carver's Creek
Silver Cricket
Meadow View
Pewter Rose

I Went to a Party, Mom

I went to a party Mom
I remember what you said
You told me not to drink, Mom
So I drank soda instead

I felt really good inside, Mom
The way you said I would
I didn't drink and drive, Mom
Though others said I should

I know I did the right thing, Mom
I know you're always right
Now the party is over
As everyone drives out of sight

As I hop into my car, Mom
I know I'd get home in one piece
Because of the way you raised me Mom
So responsible and sweet

I started to drive away, Mom
I pulled onto the road
The other car didn't see me, Mom
It hit me like a toad

As I lay here on the pavement, Mom
I hear the policeman say
The other guy was drunk, Mom
And now I'm the one who has to pay

There is blood all around me, Mom
And most of it is mine
I hear the paramedic say, Mom
I'll die in a very short time

I'm lying here dying, Mom
I wish you could get here soon
How come this happened to me, Mom?
My life burst like a balloon

I just wanted to tell you, Mom
I swear I didn't drink
It was the others, Mom
The others didn't think

He probably didn't know where he was going, Mom
He was probably at the same party as mine
The only difference is, Mom
He drank and I will die

Why do people drink, Mom?
It can ruin your life
I'm feeling sharp pains now, Mom
Pains just like a knife

The guy who hit me is walking, Mom
And I don't think that's fair
I'm lying here dying, Mom
While all he can do is stare

Tell sister and brother not to cry
Tell daddy to be brave
And when I get to heaven, Mom
Write "Daddy's Girl" on my grave

Someone should have told him, Mom
Not to drink and drive
If they would have taken the time, Mom
I would still be alive

Because when in need--you were always there
My breath is getting shorter, Mom
I'm becoming very scared
Please don't cry for me, Mom

I have one more question, Mom
Before I say goodbye
I didn't drink and drive, Mom
so why am I to die?

This is the end, Mom
I wish I could look you in the eye
And say these final words to you, Mom
I love you and good-bye

Anonymous

Prom Agenda

When the big day arrives on April 26, what will you be doing? Chances are that if you're a girl you'll:

Get up early
Eat nutritiously
Shower
Talk with friends
Talk your Dad out of escorting you
Nail Appointment
Hair Appointment
Makeup
Put on hose
Put on Dress
Eagerly await date

And if you're a guy you'll:

Get up early
Eat anything
Shower
Go to work
Shower
Put on tux
Brush hair
Pick up date

**Congratulations
to UNC coach
Dean Smith
On
Victory 877**

ACC Cinderella

By Cliff Mauriello

N. C. State turned another losing season into a post-season opportunity. Under new head coach Herb Sendeck, the Wolfpack became the first eight seed to make the championship game of the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament, where they lost to Dean Smith's North Carolina Tar Heels. Over the course of the regular season, N.C. State won only a handful of games, but two were against Top Ten opponents Clemson and Wake Forest. In the ACC Tournament, they defeated another Top Ten foe by upsetting number one seed Duke. State's tournament success landed the Wolfpack in the National Invitational Tournament and was labeled the Cinderella story of the year. The man who deserves all the credit, however, was robbed of proper recognition.

Herb Sendeck should have been named A.C.C. Coach of the Year, but instead Duke's Coach K. received the award. Sendeck was not even among the top three vote getters. Dean Smith and Maryland's Gary Williams finished in second and third place respectively. Coach K.'s effort to take the Blue Devils from last place in the conference standings to first place in two years is remarkable, but Duke was unable to perform in the post season tournament.

Dean Smith turned an 0-3 team into an NCAA East Regional number one seed, but Smith has had more number one seeds than any other coach in conference history. Gary Williams also had a successful rebuilding campaign with the Terrapins, but he had better players than the N.C. State Wolfpack had.

Sendeck on the other hand, took a program that had been in the bottom half of the ACC since the early 90's and sent it to the NIT. And he did it with a nucleus of five overachieving players who got hot at the end of the season. Duke and Maryland finished the regular season in a slump. The Blue Devils lost three of their last four games entering the NCAA tournament, and the Terrapins went from second place in the ACC standings to fifth. The Wolfpack won eight of their last nine games, an outstanding testament of Sendeck's coaching.

When one takes a look at the situations surrounding each coach, Sendeck's accomplishment outshined Coach K.'s, Smith's, and Williams's. He should have been recognized for his achievement, but instead he was slighted. It's a shame. The Wolfpack will win a lot of basketball games in the future under Sendeck, but his most important work will go unrecognized.

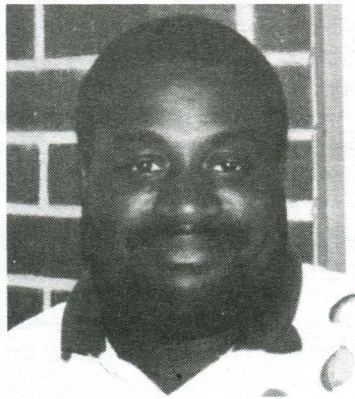
Gaston named Coach of the Year

By Jennifer Collins

"Working together works!" Anyone who has ever attended a South Meck women's basketball game would recognize this chant. Coach Troy Gaston originated the motto, and his players have followed it all season. Their teamwork was a large part of their success.

In only his second year as South Mecklenburg's head coach, Troy Gaston was named Southwestern 4A Coach of the Year for his dedication to an incredibly successful team.

The recipient of this award is selected by all of the conference coaches, with each coach allotted one vote. Gaston's Lady



Basketball coach Troy Gaston Sabres went undefeated in conference play and won the conference tournament for the fourth straight year. The team

finished with a record of 23-4, breaking the school mark for wins.

Gaston believes that a team is only as strong as its assistant coaches. Accordingly, he gives much credit to assistant coaches Vince Armstrong, Leslie Adams, and Rashede Taylor. He believes that they played a crucial role in the season's success.

And, of course, Gaston salutes his players, the Southwestern 4A champions.

"You have to have horses to make things happen. This award is a tribute to the kids who play for South, rather than me," said Gaston.

Sabre Soccer ready to repeat

By Cliff Mauriello

The Lady Sabre soccer team has made winning a tradition by claiming the last two Southwestern 4A conference titles and by advancing to the state semifinals last season. The senior class, one of the most talented in school history, wants to keep the momentum going this season and establish a winning tradition in their underclassmen teammates.

The Sabres started on the right foot with an 11-1 victory over Olympic and a 7-1 win against Freedom. The Sabres tied Parkwood 1-1 on Lauren Coggins' penalty kick to remain unbeaten in the preseason.

Two Sabres could have record breaking seasons for South Mecklenburg. Charlotte Moore, 1996 Regional Player of the Year, leads the Sabres in scoring and could break the school record for career goals. Coggins, a two time All-Regional midfielder, leads the Sabres in assists and could break the school record in career assists.

Seniors Nicole Van Every, Julie Roberts, and Ginnie Hench lead a spirited defensive attack that allowed only three goals in the first three games.

Three freshmen accompany the seniors in their quest for a third straight conference cham-

pionship.

"I think our success depends on how the younger players develop," said Coach Lynch.

The most ominous obstacle in the way of another Southwestern 4A title is arch rival Providence. The Panthers return a talented squad from last year's team. Myers Park is also considered a challenger for the conference title.

Last year the Sabres finished 19-1-2, losing to state champions Greensboro Grimsley in the semi-finals of the state tournament. South was ranked fourth overall in the state to end the 1996 season.

Softball begins new era with new coach

By Karen Whichard

The state of North Carolina is entering its second year of fastpitch softball, and South Meck appears to be one step closer to making a successful transition. As a slowpitch team the Sabres finished in the top eight in the state, but struggled last year during fastpitch's inaugural season.

South returns all but two players from last year's squad, and sophomore pitcher Kristy Davis has improved tremendously from last season. All-Conference center fielder Christine Klem graduated, but the addition of Harding transfer Jacquie DuBois has filled what had appeared to be a hole in the de-



Sophomore pitcher Kristy Davis delivers the ball to homeplate.

fense. If the Sabres keep their errors down, they will do well.

The biggest change this season for the Sabres is new head coach Leslie Adams. She played collegiate softball for Florida State,

and her knowledge of the game is providing the team with more confidence about fastpitch softball. When she was asked about the season, she said, "The team will do well."

Track team hitting its stride

By Nicole Ewing

The women's track team is full of talent for the '97 season. They have many returning seniors along with several talented freshmen. Last season the team did not finish as well in the conference as they would have liked, but they anticipate

"The competition will be tough, but we will strive to do our best."

Gia Clements

doing better this season. "We have a much more balanced team than we have had in the past. We have a lot of sprinters, distance runners, and many people doing field events which will definitely help us," said Coach Gaston.

The distance program looks very promising. Last year the

distance team had only three members, but this year eight girls complete the squad. Coach Dave said, "The team has great potential and a lot of new faces. I would like to see all of them try their hardest to get their state qualifying times."

The competition is going to be difficult, with Providence and West Charlotte the main conference contenders. "The competition will be tough, but we will strive to do our best," said captain Gia Clements.

The men's team is also doing well. The relay teams are very strong, and the 4 X 800, 4 X 100, and the 4 X 200 teams have already qualified for regionals. The relay teams should do well in conference competition also.

The distance runners are capable of challenging for the conference title, too. They are led by Mike and Cliff Mauriello.

Congratulations to the following Sabres who were selected to a Southwestern 4A All-Conference team for their respective sport.

**Kristy Michue
Mike Mauriello
Katy Dillard
Gerry Hoskins
Justin Boudrie
Brian Appling
Morris Sanders
Gus Doulaveris
Steve Gowdy
John Moffitt
Jovanca McCullough
Terrisha Hardin
Chiquita Thomas**

Baseball in full swing

By Karen Whichard

The crack of the bats can be heard once again, signaling the arrival of spring and baseball season at South Meck. This year marks the beginning of Coach Bagwell's tenure as head coach, and the team is favored to win the conference by the *Charlotte Observer*.

South is loaded with talent this season, and should improve on their 10-14 record last season. Junior pitcher Chris Jones is being recruited by major colleges, and catcher Jason Kirk has already signed with UNCC. Adam Freeman, possibly one of the best second basemen in the county, is joined by first baseman Bill Weatherford and third baseman Rick Gromlovits to build a solid infield. Outfielders Parrish McIntyre and Matt Holowecky are also All-Conference caliber players.

In the Southwestern 4A, South will have to contend with Myers Park and Independence for the league crown. Providence is also a strong favorite to win, with four conference coaches selecting them to finish first.

Tennis team is ready to step into spotlight

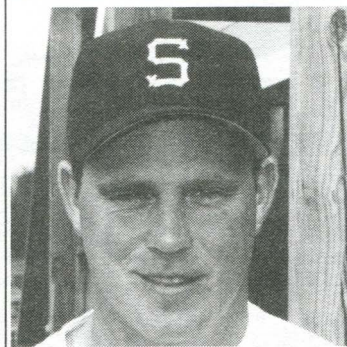
By Jennifer Collins

The men's tennis team is making a racket! This season should be a successful one, and they want to be noticed. The team does not have a lot of newcomers, so experience should guide the team to success.

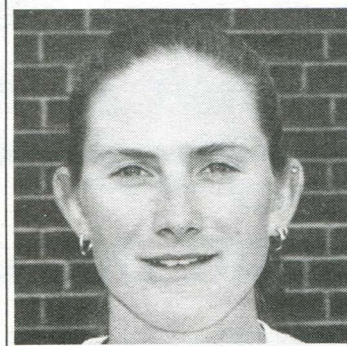
Chris Prentice is expected to lead the Sabres in conference competition. He plays both singles and doubles for the team. Prentice commented about the team, "We have a strong team this year. If we can beat Myers Park and Providence, then we'll be at the top of our conference and ready for states." In order to beat Providence and Myers Park, South will need outstanding performances out of every player.

Coach Weaver said, "If we play hard, play smart, and worry more about our personal performance than the outcome of winning or losing, we'll be a good team."

New Coaches



Hal Bagwell



Leslie Adams

New AutoTech curriculum

By Andrew Buchert

South's new Automotive Technology instructor, Mr. Pressley, has initiated many changes to the program's curriculum since arriving last fall. The preliminary step was becoming certified by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF), which enables students to receive both high school and college credit in automotive courses. "It is not a place where we take a screwdriver, a pair of pliers, and a hammer and go to it anymore," said Mr. Pressley.

Auto Tech teaches the skills necessary for a career in the automotive industry. "Deciding careers is a big decision," said Pressley, "and I am happy to give students a realistic idea of automotive technology."

Pressley teaches Auto Tech I, which is an introduction to automotive technology, and Auto Tech II, which meets everyday

and receives two credits. "I would like to encourage students who are interested in working on cars for a career and who are interested in learning how to troubleshoot their own cars to enroll," said Pressley.

Another change to the automotive program is the new technology. "Almost everything in the modern automobile is connected to and regulated by a computer," said Pressley. "You might consider Auto Tech if you like hands-on and playing with technology, such as computers."

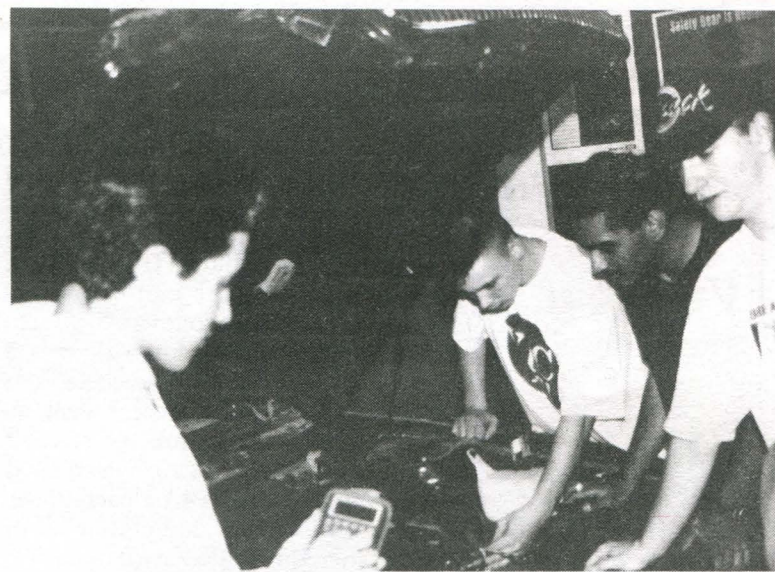
The auto building is much cleaner this year, as are mechanic garages and car dealerships today. "The shop is clean enough where you don't get dirty just walking in the door," said Mr. Pressley.

Auto Tech students practice the skills they learn in each unit on modern cars. South currently has a 1993 Dodge Car-

van donated by Chrysler in 1995, a 1988 Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck donated by General Motors in 1989, and the front portion of a 1993 Buick LeSabre that was a project of Central Piedmont Community College that did not work out. "We hope to get it running, and it doesn't take up a whole lot of room," said Pressley. A 1996 Dodge Neon is in the process of being sent to South from Chrysler.

For those auto students interested in a career in mechanics, Chrysler and GM both have programs through CPCC. A student must complete the required CPCC classes, and will graduate with a guaranteed full-time job.

Next year auto mechanics will be part of a new club, Vocational Industrial Club of America (VICA). Students compete against other schools in such



Auto Tech students practice on donated automobiles.

areas as diagnosing a problem in a set amount of time. "In the job market there is a lot of competition, and this prepares you for that time in your life," said Pressley.

Auto Tech is for those students interested in a career, whether it be engineering or mechanics, but Pressley also

wants to make the class enjoyable. "I want to get it where you enjoy coming to Auto Tech no matter what you plan to do for a career," he said. "I am very pleased with the progress we have made so far to the program. I enjoy this [teaching] more than anything I have ever done in my life."

DECA sending ten to Anaheim competition

By Mike Klein

The 1997 North Carolina Development Conference, held annually to select the state's finest DECA students for national competition was held at the Benton Convention Center in downtown Winston-Salem March 16-18. Students at this convention competed to qualify for the National Career Development Conference by finishing as an overall series winner or runner up.

In addition to the many accomplishments of DECA students in testing and role play situations, South had ten members invited to the national com-

petition in Anaheim, California in late April. They are Amy Bailes, Sean Busher, Tiffany Dolph, Amy Hickel, Chris Keen, Jimmy Kimball, Mike Klein, Alicia Speller, Kathy van Brederode, and Allison Wynne.

This is the second consecutive year South has had ten of its students qualify, and the national competition in Anaheim is sure to be a success. South Meck DECA also received two awards as a collective whole. They were honored for having ten percent growth and for being the second largest chapter in North Carolina.



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Sabre Recognition

-Marian Diperna and Michael Sanders participated in the North Carolina Music Educators Association Honors Band. Marian, a flutist, and Michael, a horn player, were selected to play after a very tough audition.

-Kim Carroll was crowned Miss Pineville last month.

-The following students were chosen to participate in this year's All-State Choir:

Leslie Whitten, Carrie Elam, Doug Blumenthal, Josh Acuff, Michael Page, Matt Meyer, Lisa Gerald, Marja Franklin, and Lauren Laganis.

-The following will participate in the All-County Choir: Adrian Damiano, Alexis Dealy, Corey Jania, Corey Robinson, Marisa Spicer, Karen Whichard, Julie Leonard, Shelly Moore, Jill Pope, Tamara Shaw, Laura Williams, Kevin Jeffries, David Walton, Shawn Millington, and Brent Townsend.

-South's chapter of FHA/HERO won first place at the Regional Competition on March 6 at CPCC. Kelly McLaughlin won first place in Creative Home Interiors, Kalonda Simpson won first place in Focus on Children, and Melissa Hollar won first place in food service.

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